



Food Manager Memo # 2

Revised - September 19, 2003

Hair Restraints

Although it poses very little public health risk, lack of hair restraints is one of the most common complaints LLCHD receives. The food code requires, and common sense dictates, that effective hair restraints must be worn to keep hair out of the customers food.

Who needs a hair restraint?

The key distinction is whether or not a person prepares food.

Any person preparing food must wear a hair restraint. A hair net would be the most effective, but a ball cap or scarf may be used for persons with short hair, or properly restrained long hair.

Employees such as a waitress, waiters and managers that primarily serve food, would not typically have to wear a hair restraint, but must have long hair restrained such as by pony tail or braid.

If an employee is not involved in food preparation, such as a hostess, a maitre d', or a manager, then no hair restraint is required.

What type of hair restraint is acceptable?

Commonly acceptable hair restraints include ball caps, visors or scarfs for people with short hair, Braids or a pony tail are typically used by people with longer hair, along with a cap, visor or scarf. Long pony tails or braids should of course never come in front of the shoulder since they may fall into the customer's food. Don't forget the age old hair net - they are still the most effective hair restraint.

What length of hair is considered long?

Hair that is over four inches is considered "long" hair. If the hair is pulled back into a pony tail and there is less than four inches of hair free then the hair is restrained. An elastic every four inches is sufficient control for really long hair. Some consideration will be given to how well the hair is groomed. Rest assured that no inspector is ever going to measure the actual length of your hair.

We trust that this guidance will help you to comply with the code and reduce complaints and violations in this area.